

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE
Mansfield Downtown Partnership office**

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

DRAFT MINUTES

Members: Chair Steve Bacon, Chris Kueffner, Peter Millman, Greg Padick, Betsy Paterson, and Sondra Astor-Stave

Staff: Kathleen Paterson

Guests: Lou Marquet with LeylandAlliance; Kristin Schwab, UConn Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture; UConn students Michael Bruno, Yuting Liu, Guang Zhou, and Myles Simon

1. Call to Order

Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes from December 15, 2015 and February 16, 2016

Betsy Paterson moved to approve the minutes as presented. Greg Padick seconded the motion.

The Minutes from December 15, 2015 were approved unanimously.

The Minutes from February 16, 2016 were approved with one abstention (G. Padick).

4. Discussion of Public Space Plan for Storrs Center

Mr. Bacon recapped the process to date, including the stakeholder meeting in March. He reported that he, Kristin Schwab, and Cynthia van Zelm had met to review the input from the committee and the stakeholder meeting and to consolidate options based on the feedback. Mr. Bacon noted that the committee will need to make a recommendation to the Partnership Board. He said next steps will include developing a budget for the projects and identifying funding.

Lou Marquet expressed concerns about zoning.

Mr. Bacon noted that the Town's Director of Planning and Development attended the stakeholder meeting.

Mr. Padick said he thought everything presented would fall under the zoning permit and that, at most, a modification for approval by the Director.

Kristin Schwab explained the process of refining the designs based on the feedback from the committee, stakeholders, and Partnership staff. She said that more emphasis was placed on way-finding signage and that preliminary cost estimates have been added.

Guang Zhou presented the team's work on the way-finding signage, including refined signage to direct visitors to different parking options.

Committee members discussed the need to balance better and additional visual cues for visitors while also avoiding too much signage.

Ms. Schwab commented that the development is still very new and advised that it will take time for regional knowledge of the area to be established. She suggested one solution may be to unify the disparate signage through a more deliberate and comprehensive design.

Mike Bruno presented an inventory of the street furnishings used in Storrs Center, including bike racks and benches. He noted there is potential to add more color and creativity through street furniture.

Yuting Liu presented her revised proposal for the courtyard on Dog Lane. She noted that, of her original proposals, the design featuring low and high plantings areas with a sitting wall was the preferred option. She suggested adding bistro lights above the space to add more lighting and to create the feeling of a ceiling.

Mr. Marquet suggested adding a fire pit to the seating area.

The committee discussed maintenance, oversight, and safety issues with regards to a fire pit. Alternative suggestions included a moveable fire pit just for events, space heater columns that display but contain flames, and artwork that evokes the feeling of fire.

Mr. Padick expressed concern about the amount of lighting the space receives for plantings.

Ms. Schwab explained that the students has done a light and shade study as part of their earlier work. She said that shade-tolerant plants would be used.

Peter Millman asked if the students had prioritized their proposals.

Ms. Schwab said they had not done so but could if that is something the committee would like.

(Mr. Millman left the meeting at 6:00 PM.)

Mr. Bruno presented his new proposal for the walkway between 8 and 12 Royce Circle. He explained that the design is a hybrid of his two previous proposals with refinements based on feedback from the group and from the Fire Marshal's office, which has designated the area as an emergency access point. He explained that he moved some of the trees and walls based on the need for emergency access. He noted that he suggests using the same type of pavers and light pylons as on the Town Square to unify the spaces.

Mr. Marquet suggested changing the seating area so that people could face each other.

Mr. Zhou presented his proposal for the Wilbur Cross Way area. He focused on the rainbow ribbon idea based on the feedback he received from his previous presentations. He noted that each stripe of color would be 20 inches wide.

Chris Kueffner expressed a strong preference for the other proposal.

Mr. Marquet said that he preferred the strong stage element in the other proposal.

Mr. Bacon commented that the proposed design creates a neighborhood.

Ms. Paterson said she liked that the design was creative and unique.

Myles Simon presented his design for the area across the street from Educational Playcare. He said that, of his three proposals, the “king climber” idea received the most positive feedback. He explained the different materials that would be used on the ground and landscaping and noted that he has begun researching pricing for the climbing elements.

Ms. Schwab briefly recapped the team’s work on the smaller areas, including a proposed walkway between the Oaks surface lot in Phase 2 and Royce Circle, the utilities area near the Post Office, and the various bump-outs throughout the project.

Mr. Bacon asked the committee if they would like to make recommendations to the Board. Hearing no objections, he recapped the discussion of Mr. Bruno’s presentation and noted the suggestions that arose. The committee endorsed Mr. Bruno’s design.

Ms. Bacon then recapped the discussion of Mr. Zhou’s ribbon design. The committee, with the exception of Mr. Kueffner, endorsed the design.

Mr. Bacon briefly recapped the discussions of Ms. Liu’s and Mr. Simon’s designs, which were endorsed by the committee.

5. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Minutes prepared by Kathleen M. Paterson.